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26 April 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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Cambodia-Vietnam: Sihanouk is apparently making a new attempt at a political accommodation with the Vietnamese Communists.

In a 24 April speech, he claimed that Cambodia would sign agreements with North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front at a forthcoming "summit meeting." He did not, however, spell out what the agreements would cover and it appears that this has not yet been fully resolved. Sihanouk stated that there were still points in dispute which remain to be negotiated before the "bases" for "peaceful coexistence" between Cambodia and the Vietnamese Communists can be established.

Sihanouk's last effort to reach a formal understanding with the Communists foundered in late 1964 when Hanoi rejected his demands for special status for ethnic Cambodians living in South Vietnam. In the intervening months Sihanouk characterized Hanoi's position as an example of "Vietnamese perfidy." The recent granting of diplomatic status to Hanoi's commercial delegation in Phnom Penh, however, suggests that more careful preparations have been made this time for reaching at least a limited Cambodian-Vietnamese agreement.

Sihanouk's objective in pushing for a political understanding with the Communists at this juncture is not clear. It may be related to a growing realization that the Communists will need to make greater use of Cambodian territory as the war in South Vietnam intensifies and a desire to restrict future Vietnamese demands in this regard.

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Tanzania: [On the second anniversary of the Tanzanian union, Zanzibar continues to resist efforts by President Nyerere for closer integration and is mounting new attacks on the US presence.]

[Zanzibar's Communists in the island's ruling Revolutionary Council, apparently encouraged by bloc officials, are accelerating their efforts to force the removal of the US Consulate. Earlier this month their pressure caused the closing of the USIS library and the removal of the US public affairs officer. They now appear to have convinced Tanzanian Vice President Karume, who heads their local government, that the US consul is involved in a counterrevolutionary plot.]

[The Zanzibaris argue that the Americans were responsible for the coups in Ghana and Indonesia and have established a firm grip on Kenya. Many Tanzanians expect the next imperialist blow to fall on them, as leaders in the effort to eliminate white rule in southern Africa.]

[The Zanzibaris' anti-US tack may also be designed to disrupt Nyerere's efforts to consolidate the union. In recent visits to Zanzibar, Nyerere has reportedly been pressing Karume and the council to accept an extension of the Tanzanian constitution to cover Zanzibar and to relinquish their control of civil service matters. Extension of the constitution would provide for eventual free elections which the Zanzibar rulers would stand little chance of winning. On 24 April Karume and all other council members made a hasty trip to the mainland, presumably to discuss these problems.]

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NOTES

Ecuador: Leaders of three of the five significant political parties have decided to issue a manifesto demanding a voice in the new electoral law, elections for a constituent assembly on 4 September, and its convening on 9 October. This manifesto appears to be the opening gun in the political battle for control of the nation which will develop once a constituent assembly meets. The ability of provisional President Yerovi to carry out a smooth transition to constitutional government is questionable, according to the US Embassy, because of his weakness, the deteriorating economic situation, and the possible disruptive influence of followers of ex-President Velasco Ibarra.

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